

Frankford Arsenal, Building 46  
Northwest corner of Ripley Street and Worth Road  
Philadelphia  
Philadelphia County  
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-74G

HAER  
PA,  
51-PHILA.  
693-G-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office  
National Park Service  
U. S. Department of the Interior  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Frankford Arsenal, Building 46

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Location: Northwest corner of Ripley Street and Worth Road  
Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania

Quad: Frankford

Date of Construction: 1915

Significance: Building 46, constructed in 1915 as a tin shop, is associated with the large scale expansion of Frankford Arsenal that resulted from the United States' entry into World War I. Served as the instrument shop and laboratory from ca. 1939 to ca. 1955. The instrument shop was responsible for the development of many advanced guidance and optical systems throughout this period.

Historian: Patrick W. O'Bannon  
Principal Historian  
John Milner Associates, Inc.  
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Philadelphia, PA 19107

## **HISTORY**

Building 46 was erected in 1915 as a tin shop, as part of a large-scale building program associated with World War I. Between 1918 and 1922, the building was converted for use as a shell shop. Between ca. 1939 and 1955, the building housed the instrument shop and laboratory. Sights and other instruments were assembled in this building. Prior to 1955, the plating shop and artillery plant occupied the building. The final use of the building was as a guidance equipment plant.

## **DESCRIPTION**

Building 46 is a two-story red brick building with brownstone trim and a concrete foundation. The building, which has a gabled slate roof, measures approximately 59 feet by 244 feet. Segmentally arched entry on south facade with brownstone quoins. Entry infilled with brick, louvers, and two-leaf doors. A carved brownstone datestone, reading '1915', is located above the entry. The building's facades are divided into window bays by plain brick pilasters. Corbeled brickwork connects the tops of the pilasters below a corbeled brick cornice. Window openings are paired within the window bays. Each opening has a segmentally-arched brownstone lintel and brownstone sills. Original sash consist of paired four-over-four sash below two-light transoms. Most second-story sash have been replaced by translucent panels. The gable tympanums each have three round arched windows in a Palladian-like arrangement. A ramped concrete loading dock is located along the north and east sides of the building. The interior consists of a number of rooms of various sizes. There is no architectural ornamentation or trim

## **SOURCE**

John Milner Associates, "Historical and Archeological Survey of Frankford Arsenal," West Chester, PA: John Milner Associates, 1979.

Report prepared for the Department of the Army, Baltimore District, Corps of Engineers, Baltimore, Maryland. Copies on file at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Free Library of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

**For complete overview of site, see HAER No. PA-74.**

